



## FAQ

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### ***What will I personally and professionally gain from the Northern Mallee Leaders Program?***

NMLP is designed to assist anyone involved in their local community, business or industries to improve their effectiveness in current roles and take on the challenges and opportunities of new leadership roles. You can expect to gain:

- Increased skills, knowledge and confidence that is transferable to a range of contexts
- Increased awareness of regional issues, opportunities, challenges and innovative ideas
- Increased understanding of various local community, state-wide and national issues, that shape your views, perspectives and interests
- Access to an influential network of community leaders and resources across the region

#### ***How will my employer, organisation or industry benefit from my participation in NMLP?***

- Our participants develop a great understanding of what it takes to lead in a community or organisational setting;
- Our participants improve their performance in effective communication, public speaking, working effectively with others and in teams, negotiation, decision making, community consultation, advocacy, productivity, governance including risk management, creativity and problem solving.
- Our participants develop self-awareness and self-confidence, and are prepared to take on responsibilities they did not think possible at their workplace and in their community;
- Through access to our Alumni network, other businesses and events, your organisation will align itself with a strong network of local, state and federal government leaders, business and industry representatives and community leaders.

#### ***Is NMLP a Business Management Course?***

NMLP primary focus is *Community* leadership. However, NMLP acknowledges all layers of leadership and caters to both community, not-for-profits, business and representative organisations. Some of our participants may already be in official positions of leadership, and others will be active grassroots leaders, although they may not yet identify themselves as such. We specifically recruit for diversity and are strongly committed to broad representation from across sectors, cultures, demographics, world views and life experiences from across our region which is north west Victoria and southern NSW. The diversity of the mix of our participants is one of the key strengths and learning opportunities of the program. Exposure to the issues, presenters, learning and networks will enhance your business management skills if that is your field, but this is not our primary intention. Communities need to build capacity, be better skilled, better networked and more self-aware in order to become more vibrant, inclusive, innovative and sustainable. The flow on benefits of this to regional economies and healthy communities is significant. This is our primary aim.

***I don't really consider myself to be a 'leader', should I apply?***

Yes, definitely! The benefits could be life-changing as many of our Alumni will confirm.

***What issues and skills are covered as part of the program?***

The program varies slightly from year to year as we continuously seek to be relevant and improve what is on offer, but is based on current best practice in leadership development, and generally covers the following:

**Themes:**

- Community Development
- Arts & Culture
- Media and Communication
- Regional Economy and Tourism
- Social Justice
- Health and Well being
- Youth and Education
- Our place in the world – International Leadership and global issues
- Our Political landscape
- Governance and Justice
- Food, Water and Environment

**Skills:**

- Leading and building teams
- Working effectively with others
- Governance including Risk Management
- Public Speaking
- Conflict Resolution
- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Managing events
- Utilising Media & social media
- Managing yourself

and many others.....

***What is the time and attendance commitment?***

The program year involves a total of 25 days over a ten-month period (February to November). Apart from the months with a study tour (Melbourne & Canberra), there will be on average two program days per month. The opening, closing and mid-year weekend retreats plus Canberra and Melbourne Study Tours are compulsory. Participants are required to attend an 80% minimum of program days and complete all evaluation requirements (after every program day) and undertake a community project in order to graduate.

Program days generally run between 8.30am and 5.30pm, with travel time on top of this. Evening sessions are organised in conjunction with overnight stays. It is the participants' responsibility to get themselves to the program day venues by the start time and you are required to stay until the conclusion of the program day.

***Travel & accommodation?***

Your accommodation costs are covered for overnight stays between program days (e.g.: retreats, study tours and two-day programs). This involves shared accommodation (no sharing across genders) and sometimes fairly basic accommodation.

Travel costs are *not covered* (*with the exception of the Melbourne and Canberra trips*). We suggest you car pool wherever possible as not only is this safer on long program days but it's a great way to

get to know your fellow participants. If you do not have access to your own transport, please let the program manager know and we will try to find a way to accommodate you.

***What time input is required between program days?***

There is some time required between program days; this may involve some research on topics and speakers, completing the evaluation/reflection and other small leadership / group activities.

Participants will be involved in ‘Duty Teams’ 3 -4 times during the year. This involves being part of a team of 4 participants whose responsibility it is to run the program days. This includes confirming, introducing and thanking speakers, keeping sessions to time and other small tasks which will be briefed. On these occasions more work will be required between days. This is considered an opportunity to enhance the learning/experience from the program.

Participants will also be required to complete a small group community project within 6 months of graduation. Many participants commence these during their program year, which will also involve time outside of the program days.

Participants are also expected to volunteer for an end of year project team, selecting from: yearbook committee, graduation committee, marketing committee and pay it forward committee.

Participants are also required to participate in pre and post program surveys which enable NML Inc. to gauge the quality and relevance of the program and ensure it meets your expectation.

***How much does it cost?***

There is a sliding scale of costs / opportunities, but **all** participants must pay a minimum **non-refundable** Participant Fee of \$250 (GST exclusive) payable upon acceptance of offers.

Category	Fees
Self-funded individuals	\$1650 (GST exclusive) (NB: The Participant Fee will be deducted from this amount)
Community Organisation including staff or volunteers	\$1650 (GST exclusive)

Corporate Organisation (employer sponsored; government / business)	\$3000 (GST exclusive)
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The NMLP cost per participant is approximately \$9500. At present part of this cost is being subsidised through Government, Business and Philanthropic sectors.

No person should be prevented from applying to the program due to financial hardship. Payment plan options can be negotiated.

### ***Who can apply?***

Applications are encouraged from men and women over the age of 18 who have a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. The program strives for diversity through representation from the industry, government and community sectors.

Residents or workers in the shires of Mildura Rural City (MRCC) and Wentworth Shires are encouraged to apply. No prior learning is required. We are seeking people who have a demonstrated commitment to their community, region or industry and a willingness to learn.

### ***How can I apply?***

See the 'Apply' section of our website where you will be able to follow a link to the online application form.

Email: [program@nml.org.au](mailto:program@nml.org.au) or telephone 0429 220 069 if you have any difficulties or questions.

Please note that your partner and employer/business partner (if applicable) are also required to sign the application addendum (see link on online application form) to ensure that they are aware of, and support, the commitments of the program.

**Return your completed application form to PO Box 10311 Mildura 3500 or email it to [program@nml.org.au](mailto:program@nml.org.au) by 31 October 2017 to support and confirm your online application.**

### ***How do I apply for a Scholarship?***

We have a number of scholarships available from year to year. They are often attached to a particular geographical region, industry or other specific criteria such as supporting diversity or specific knowledge.

You do not apply for a particular scholarship. Please note in your application if you would like to be considered for a scholarship, and whether your application is dependent upon receiving a scholarship. Scholarships are assessed and allocated at the discretion of the NML Inc. selection committee after all applications have been received and processed, according to meeting of scholarship criteria, best fit and need. Recipients will find out if they have been successful with a scholarship on offer.

A scholarship will cover the Program fee (NB: participants are still required to pay the Participant fee (\$250 plus GST. In return, scholarship recipients are asked to sign an agreement to provide written reports back to their sponsor and also to speak at sponsor functions if required.

#### ***What happens after the closing date?***

Your application will be acknowledged by e-mail, reviewed and you may be invited to attend an interview. The interview is a chance for you to find out more about the program as well as for our interview panel to determine your suitability for the program. The interview is usually about 30-40 minutes. Up to 25 applicants will be sent an Offer in December. All documentation must be signed and returned with the Participant Fee by **December 31** in order to retain the offered place.

#### ***What is meant by graduation?***

NMLP does not offer accredited training; however, it is considered a privilege to become a graduate of the program and part of an influential network of over 120 Alumni across north-west Victoria and southern NSW, and also a member of the Victorian Regional Community Leadership Programs, a state-wide network of over 3500 graduates from ten leadership programs.

NMLP is highly regarded by many regional organisations and will be a respected addition to your curriculum vitae and your professional development record.

Graduate names are retained on our Alumni database and kept informed of additional opportunities for professional development and community involvement and other opportunities to hone your leadership skills. In order to graduate, each participant must attend all the compulsory components

of the program, achieve 80% attendance overall and paid all relevant fees. A graduation ceremony is held at the completion of the program.

***What support is offered during the program?***

In addition to the support of the Program Manager, NML Inc. will match each participant with a mentor who can offer advice and act as a sounding board for ideas. Participants find that they also support each other during the program year.

***What does the community project involve?***

Participants are required to develop a community based project. Our preference is this will be undertaken as part of a group (though individual projects may be considered). These projects give participants the opportunity to engage with their communities, align with regional priorities and develop their skills. The aim of the project is to give participants the opportunity to get involved in their community and use some of their new found skills, information and networks. A brief project plan is required by June and a presentation to a panel at the final weekend. NML Inc. will follow up regarding the completion of the project and track its progress.

***Do I need to be able to use the internet and other technology?***

Yes, there is a requirement that all participants can gain access to the internet on a regular basis (even at the local library) between program days. Surveys, email, group Facebook and an internet sharing site are used to evaluate the program, share information and update participants between program days. We also use online resources to enrich the learning experience. Please do not let this stop you from applying. As long as you can get access to the internet and are willing to learn, we can help.